



Ecosystem Protections Working Group

Meeting Minutes

Date: 09/13/2011

Start Time: 2:00pm

End Time: 3:15pm

Meeting Method: Conference Call, Go-To Webinar

Attendance: Jack Kittinger (call lead), Adam Pack, Sarah Mesnick, Micki Ream, Lisa White (note taker), Alex Sheftic, Hannah Bernard, Malia Chow, Jon Martinez, Brenda Asuncion, Eric Kingma, Teri Leicher, Joey Lecky

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- Update on meeting w/ NHWG
At the Humpback Whale working group workshop Sol gave an introduction that connected the Native Hawaiian perspective and the contemporary perspective on the ecosystem-based management approach that will be a good preface to the EPWG recommendation document. Sol shared that the Kumulipo chant and connections to kohola and the ecosystem demonstrates that ecosystem protection is foundational. After the HWWG workshop chairs of EPWG and NHWG met to discuss incorporating Sol's insights into the EPWG recommendation document. The Native Hawaiian working group is discussing this Kumulipo interpretation introduction this week. Adam will meet with Kehau in Hilo Wednesday night to discuss further. The EPWG/NHWG meeting with Sol and Kehau, et al established a way forward to synthesize recommendations from both groups.
- Review report outline (5 min)
Initial comments on outline: Hannah questioned use of term "Native peoples of the Hawaiian Islands" vs "Native Hawaiians"? Native Hawaiians is a more common usage, so will switch terminology back to Native Hawaiians.

Jack reviewed 4 sections of the report outline.

Further comments on outline: Is there an implicit understanding of evaluating the 3 alternatives in the context of the existing Sanctuary boundaries? It should be made clear in the range of alternatives section that discussions are based on existing boundaries.

Is there a need for a boundaries section in this document? Recommend Sanctuary examine boundaries if group recommends going ecosystem-based because the boundaries were originally set based on densities of humpback whales.

The group should address boundaries early in the report. Can pilot an ecosystem approach within the existing boundaries, but recognize that they do not encompass full ecosystems.

ACTION: Discuss a boundaries section further on next call.

- Review responses from EPWG to the range of alternatives and discuss (Section III) (20min)
WG members asked to present what they see as the pros and cons of each alternative:
Alex: The way I see it the Sanctuary can be like a turtle only stick its neck out when it needs to, or it can stick its head out a little (add species), or it can stick its head way out (ecosystem). Groups will have to be involved, we will need education and outreach, there will be compromise with groups. Working with many groups does not have to be confrontational. The Sanctuary can bring groups together.
The major con for all of these alternatives is that you can't please all groups.

Adam: A consideration for all alternatives is the social science aspect. The Sanctuary needs to be cognizant of the implications of each approach. My vote is for ecosystem.

The status quo looks at humpback whales which are large biomass that other species rely on when the whales are here. The protection of whales and their habitat is not just physical but also social organization. The HW is a part of the larger ecosystem whose boundaries extend beyond HI, e.g. Alaska entanglements. It does not make sense to simply protect HW. In essence we are dealing with more and more an ecosystem approach.

In terms of adding some additional species, that's pandora's box because once you add one species depending what level its feeding at, then it unravels protecting its prey and what the prey relies on and it's a domino effect to protect the entire ecosystem.

The cons to the ecosystem approach are resources. Financial resources: The Sanctuary in this economic climate is doing its best to keep up with whales but is constrained by budget now. The Sanctuary will need to increase staffing and expand expertise with the knowledge base of implementing ecosystem approach. There is a possibility that more user groups will be affected than with the status quo.

But in balancing all of those it still makes sense to go with the ecosystem approach. The Sanctuary comes more into line with native approaches and national trends if it moves to ecosystem.

Hannah: Ditto to Adam. Status quo could be justified because as the HW population continues to grow we will have more user conflicts and it needs management, but the con is that you can't manage one species and do it successfully. It's been proven all over the world. Additional species won't work either because how do you choose which ones to add. If you add monk seals and green turtles, what about false killer whales? It is an unsatisfying approach. The ecosystem approach is the way to go. You can get the community on board by the Sanctuary being a leader, e.g. assisting with community-based management. There are challenges with developing marine spatial planning, e.g. the reserve on Maui 8 years later is still not managed well enough. For all of the biological and social reasons we need to go to ecosystem.

Eric: We need to expound on the alternatives. Add species and then what? The current role of the Sanctuary is education/outreach. Will the Sanctuary take on a regulatory/rule making role? What type of management and what regulatory alternatives will be needed to address



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gaps? There could be a need for ecosystem management but the role for the Sanctuary needs to be identified. The Sanctuary needs to elaborate on boundaries. The Sanctuary needs to identify a problem. What species are not being managed? Whether a species is fully protected or not is a different question. Before the group makes its recommendations, we need to identify the problem that the Sanctuary will address. The WESPAC official position is supportive of the status quo, and potentially adding monk seals, but nothing further until the Sanctuary shows the need.

Jack: The pros for status quo are that there's a lot of institutional knowledge. The con for status quo is that it's single species management.

The pro for adding species is that, well there's not a lot of pros. You have the 2007 report as a guide. The cons for adding species is that the 2007 report leaves out species and all of the species referenced in the report all have protection already.

The pro for the ecosystem-based management approach is that the National Ocean Council recommends it and the approach is adopted internationally. We need to integrate ocean governance. The underlying goal is to unite these managers. The cons to the ecosystem approach are the high transaction costs. It will take lots of time, energy, resources to engage in ecosystem-based management and it could generate more conflict. It will be a lengthy process. There is a question of what model to use to implement ecosystem-based management. Figuring out which pathways are best will take time. There is not a holistic system, there are lots of institutions to engage, and it will take time to coordinate with all of the institutions. But still the pros outweigh the cons!

Discussion on alternatives: Alex believes if the group agreement is to recommend ecosystem-based management, then the implementation part has to be addressed. But the obstacles to implementation can be addressed and the Sanctuary can work out a good, implementable plan.

If we decide to recommend an ecosystem approach addressing the concerns of "who's already doing this and is there a lack of coordination?" needs to be clearly addressed.

Jack pointed out that the evaluation of the alternatives is broad strokes now but section IV identifies the need to unpack what is meant by an ecosystem-based management approach for the Sanctuary.

WG members asked to please flesh out and submit comments on pros and cons of alternatives by email to Jack, Adam and Sarah. We need a more fleshed out rationale for why you support the approach you did. Please submit by 9/23. Date may be flexible.

- Review responses from the EPWG to the definition of ecosystem-based management and discuss (Section IVa) (20 min)
 - Need to be more specific on what an ecosystem-based management approach means in HI.
 - Please comment on definition via email to Sarah, Adam and Jack by 9/23.



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- Review responses from the EPWG to the recommendations (Section IVb) (20 min)
 - WG members asked to submit written comment by 9/23.
- Discuss adding to / finishing spread sheet which compares ecosystem-based protected areas (supporting documents, section VI)
 - Agenda item skipped due to time constraint.
 - Note: After call decided that a full evaluation management strategies at other sites should be a recommendation to staff.
- Review revised letter to technical experts and list of contacts (15 min)
 - Add Eric Brown to the contact list.
 - Hannah noted that to not further the divide between western science and TEK we should send out the questions to cultural experts, too.
 - Jack explained that the Chairs met with Kehau on this and the approach right now is to just reach out to technical (western science) experts and let the NHWG engage the cultural practitioners/TEK experts and let their WG synthesize that input. It is difficult to not integrate the cultural component at this point, but it will be incorporated.
 - Hannah cautioned that we need to make sure that Sanctuary publicizes the processes of EPWG and NHWG are simultaneous.
 - Jon sees no changes to be made to the letter and supports direction the group is going.
 - Many thanks to all working group members and staff for their time and efforts!
- Public comment
 - No public on call.

Action Items:

Discuss boundaries section in report (Hannah to draft text)

ALL – Submit written comments by 9/23 to Sarah, Adam, Jack

Sarah will email word file of outline so alternatives comments can be made in track changes

Add E. Brown to contact list (Sarah)

Next meeting: Tuesday 09/27/2011 at 2:00pm